Wheat Procurement Scheme

1846. SHRI SATISH PRADHAN : Will the Minister of FOOD be pleased to state :

(a) whether Government are considering a change in wheat procurement scheme in view of the poor response of the cultivators for procurement drive this year;

(b) whether Government have identified the reasons for failure of the scheme this year; and

(c) what are the details of modified scheme ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF FOOD (SHRI TARUN GOGOI) : (a) No Sir.

(b) The main reasons for less procurement of wheat during 1991-92 and 1992-93 rabi marketing seasons have been higher open market prices that the minimum support price fixed by the Government, large scale purchases by the traders, less mandi arrivals and possible holding back of stocks by farmers in anticipation of higher prices later in the year, etc.

(c) Does not arise.

Crisis in Sugar Units

1847. SHRI SUSHILKUMAR SAMBHAJIRAO SHINDE : Will the Minister of FOOD be pleased to state :

(a) whether Government's attention has been drawn to the newsitem which appeared in Financial Express of the 13th November, 1992 under the caption "Govts' duel policy puts sugar units in crisis",

(b) if so, what is the reaction of Government thereto;

(c) the details of action taken/proposed to be taken in this regard; and

(d) what are the major policy decisions taken in the recent past to help revival of deteriorating financial health of sugar industry in India in general and particularly for cooperative sugar units in Maharashtra State ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF FOOD (SHRI TRAUN GOGOI) : (a) Yes, Sir. The Government has seen the press report.

(b) and (c) There is no serious crisis being faced by the sugar industry. The financial viability of the sugar factories is being ensured by Goverament through various measures. These include :—

(i) payment of adequate ex-factory levy sugar price determined statutorily on the basis of cost schedules and other parameters recommended by an Expert Body, namely, the Bureau of Industrial Costs and Prices (BICP);

(ii) maintenance of open market prices of sugar at reasonable levels through judicious monthly releases;

(iii) grant of financial assistance at concessional rates of interest from the Sugar Development Fund to sugar factories, both for modernisation/rehabilitation as well as for sugarcane development schemes;

(iv) grant of incentives, whenever considered necessary, by way of higher freesale quota on the production during the early and late crushing periods.

(d) The sugar mills which are sick have to themselves prepare schemes for rehabilitation/modernisation and get them approved by the Financial Instituions. Financial asistance is also available from the Sugar Development Fund for such rehabilitation/modernisation schemes subject to their fulfiling the condition laid down.

Buffer stock of Foodgrains

1848. SHRI ISH DUTT YADAV :
SHRI RAM GOPAL YADAV :

Will the Minister of FOOD be pleased to state :

(a) whether it is a fact that where has been a fall in the buffer stock of foodgrains during the years 1991 and 1992;

(b) if so, what are the reasons therefor; and

(c) what are the details of buffer stocks of foodgrains during the last three years; and the contemplated stock during 1992 :